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# MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES.

Baltimore, March, 1896.

## FRANCE, FILOLOGY, FONETICISM AND POETIC FORMULAE.

### I.

THERE are two perpetual proofs of French intellectual activity: the first is found in the variety and vitality of a kaleidoscopic Kalaestheticism—if we may be our own Symbolists—which is continually starting schools in poetry, the arts, and has even a share in the development of political theories highly-colored and picturesque if not always practicable; the other appears in the cry for reforms, or in the remaking and polishing of the old. Hence Paris is still the pivot of initiative in both sociological and scholastic radicalism, just as, by the curious combination of paradoxical elements in French character and political constitution, it remains the stronghold of much state and academic conservatism. The restless spirit of investigation and the habit of precision in expression, trained through centuries, has splendidly developed schools of syntactical study and the growth of scientific grammar in addition to good or bad attempts in artistic and literary experimentalism; the result is that France has definitely reached her Romantic revival, destructive and constructive, in Grammar.

Parisian centres are practical as well as prolific in their ideas, and the presence of certain similar points at issue in the English language, upon which the French status may throw light, but particularly the independent appearance in France of certain theories, the persistence of others, and the plea for wide-reaching reforms lends interest to their notice.

### I.

The aphorism, then, as to "Frenchmen, that is, Grammarians" has peculiar force. The logical qualities of their mind and their language; the clearness of the medium for expressing the qualities; the subtle shading of sense and word, contribute to create for the French an interest in the study of a subject which their treatment and literary style rescue from the dryness usually inherent in

such a theme. The status of the men who have busied themselves with it assures them. Scholars and satirists, poets and philosophers, comic writers and novelists, have either hurled or brought a brick to shatter or to sustain the grammatical structure. No literature offers such a sequence in this connection as the brilliant line from Vaugelas to Voltaire; the Marots, Ménages and Malherbes, "tyran des mots et des syllabes;" Ronsard, "prince of poets," and the *Pléiade*; and the band of witty, caustic reformers of Rhetoric by ridiculing its extravagances: Molière, Sorel, Scarron, Saint Évremond. When we add the profound and permanent influence of the *Précieuses*, more powerful than any corresponding movement on the continent, the element well-summed up by Somaize when he says: "De tout temps il y eut des femmes d'esprit;" the serious study of the subject by men of the type of Maupertuis and Condillac; and the host of rigorous Grammarians inferior yet most important, we can better gauge the heredity in France of such a discussion, which has taken new life and new forms and increased power because based upon principles, philosophical, practical, and even pecuniary and political.

### II.

Three books which present three phases of the reform cover the main points. In the *Lexique de Ronsard*<sup>1</sup> just published we find a much-needed defense of the poet from the charges, now classical, of his lack of patriotism for his own tongue, and his enthusiasm for external and therefore alien-to-French expressions. Limiting ourselves to two of M. Mellerio's chapters we may well see that Ronsard's rehabilitation is sufficiently complete, and that the invention of the words Ronsardize, Ronsardism, and Ronsardist need not be more of a reproach than the epithetizing characteristic of the rise of the Romantic revival.

<sup>1</sup> *Lexique de Ronsard*, précédé d'une étude sur son vocabulaire, son orthographe et sa syntaxe par L. Mellerio, Professeur au lycée Janson de Sailly, &c., et d'une préface par M. Petit de Julleville. Paris, E. Plon, Nourrit et C<sup>ie</sup>, 1895 (the latest (171st.) volume in the *Bibliothèque Elzévirienne*, completing the Ronsard series, vii (now viii) vols., 1857-1867). Two new Branthômes make the number 173.

If we owe much to Boileau, yet his baseless critical condemnation of Ronsard is on a par with his ignorance of pre-Villonian poetry. The persistence of this judgment has survived to this day, and it speaks much for conservative power in literature that no one has hitherto absolutely verified, or in this result, disproved Despréaux' dictum. The Bacchic hymn which gave the particular proof of the poet's literary sins was written, it seems, says his contemporary Claude Binet, by Bertrand Bergier de Montembeuf. So Ronsard's regrets at the impossibility of speaking in French, or claim that his French verses can be understood only by Greeks and Romans, mean respectively, that, as he says:<sup>2</sup> "notre langue ne pouvait exprimer ma conception," and that knowledge of classical mythology can alone predicate appreciation of his theme. And in his words, which had already been marked by the writer for this purpose, before he became acquainted with M. Mellerio's book, we find the following theories:

1. His love of French, in the preface to the *Franciade*:<sup>3</sup>

"Je te conseille d'apprendre diligemment la langue grecque et latine, voire italienne et espagnole; puis, quand tu les sauras parfaitement, te retirer en ton enseigne comme un bon soldat, et composer en ta langue maternelle, comme a fait Homere, Hesiodé, Platon, Aristote et Theophraste, Virgile, Tite-Live, Salluste, Lucrece et mille autres, qui parloient meme langage que les laboureurs, valets et chambrières. Car c'est un crime de leze majesté d'abandonner le langage de son pays, vivant et florissant pour vouloir deterrer je ne say quelle cendre des anciens."

2. He wishes to incorporate dialectic forms (*Franciade*, and *Art Poétique*).

3. He counsels reviving Old French:<sup>4</sup>

"Tu ne rejetteras point les vieux mots de nos romans."

"De remettre en usage les antiques vocables et principalement ceux du langage wallon et picard lequell nous reste par tant de siècles, l'exemple naïf de la langue françoise;" and "choisir les mots les plus pregnans et significatifs non seulement dudit langage mais de toutes les provinces de France."<sup>5</sup>

He elsewhere in the *Poétique* mentions other dialects.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. vii, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> *Œuvres*, Vol. iii, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> *Art Poétique*, Vol. vii, p. 320.

<sup>5</sup> *Franciade*.

M. Mellerio also gives the interesting passage, quoting Ronsard's "testament" in which he urges not to "écorcher le latin," nor to lose "natural French vocables" and these "old terms." On the other hand, he allows the creation of new words:<sup>6</sup> "Pourveu qu'ils soient moulez et façonnez sus un patron desja reçu du people."

Of Ronsard's vocabulary in his almost one hundred thousand lines, of their almost exclusive French character, of his independence, and his mistake in composing French words by Greco-Latin *imitation*, we need not speak. Interesting as the subject is, we are not, however, discussing creation of words, but criticism of existing ones, for modern grammatical reform is more occupied with present and past conditions, which, once settled, will necessarily condition the future. Leaving aside also his Syntax, his Orthography requires a few statements.

The sixteenth century, like the nineteenth, saw two schools of orthography. Rabelaisian chaos, purposely increased for both comic effect and political safeguard, had still further helped the being a law unto oneself in spelling, and the ignorance of reasons for preferences in some forms to the exclusion of others. Ramus represented phonetic reform in his *Gramère fransoeze*, as did Jacques Peletier in his *Dialogue de l'ortographe et prononciation françoese*, and Maigret. Authors believed, because of their learning, in etymological orthography. Ronsard, inclining to the former, ostensibly adopted the latter theory, but in reality, like all of the writers of the time, used a poetic pleasure and a license dictated by rhythmic or rhymic factors. But Ronsard's theories may well serve as a decalogue of modern criticism and a proof of the justice of modern demands, as we shall see, and a plea for return to 'old things best.' Take some usages, or rules of Ronsard, or recommendations: 1. He elides *i*, as in *ni*; and defends the same for *o* and *u* as do "the Italians, or rather the Greeks."<sup>7</sup> The *i*-elision might well be restored. So elision of a final unpronounced consonant for purposes of rhyme.<sup>8</sup> But though his counsels apply more particu-

<sup>6</sup> *Franciade*, Vol. iii, p. 32.

<sup>7</sup> Vol. vii, p. 326. <sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p. 328.

larly to poetry, prose and euphony can profit by them as well.

So, 2, the *s* of the first singular of verbs is to be dependent upon the avoidance of hiatus;<sup>9</sup> 3, superfluous etymological letters are to be suppressed;<sup>10</sup> 4, *z* and *k* are to be restored, and to displace the duality of use of *c* and *q*; 5, the assimilation of proper names to the vernacular;<sup>11</sup> 6, actual words shall be the basis of compounds.<sup>12</sup>

So again, in the *Advertissement au lecteur* preceding the Odes,<sup>13</sup> we find the same or other suggestions looking 7, to the dropping of etymological *y* (though retaining it as final for *i*); 8, the change of *ph* to *f*; 9, the creation of characters equivalent to the phones *ll*, *gn*, *ch*; 10, or consonantal *i* and *u* (*j* and *v*). So, also, he quite consistently puts *el'* or *ell'* for *elle*. His greatest claim seems to have been the introduction of the euphonic *t* between inverted verb and pronoun (though M. Mellerio suggests that he simply generalized popular usage which had intercalated the *t* by analogy with other conjugations; this in spite of Remy Belleau's statement as to Ronsard's invention of it). But we may sum up Ronsard's position, first by his statements; next, by his honest independence:

"Tu n'auras soucy de ce que le vulgaire dira de toy, d'autant que les Poëtes, comme les plus hardis, ont les premiers forgé et composé les mots;"<sup>14</sup>

"Je supplie très-humblement ceux ausquels les muses ont inspiré leur faveur de n'estre plus latineurs ni grecaniseurs, comme ils sont plus par ostentation que par devoir, et prendre pitié, comme bons enfans, de leur pauvre mere naturelle."<sup>15</sup>

The changes are proposed, because:

"Quant à notre esriture, elle est fort vicieuse et corrompue, et me semble qu'elle a grand besoin de reformation."<sup>16</sup>

so, the *Caprice*, *Tout est perdu*:<sup>17</sup>

"Promene-toy dans les plaines Attiques,  
Fay nouveaux mots, r'appelle les antiques,  
Voy les Romains . . . . .  
Lors sans viser aux jalouses atteintes  
Des mal-vueillans, formes-en les douceurs  
Que Melpomene inspire dans les coeurs!

9 *ibid.*, p. 333. 10 *ibid.*, p. 334. 11 *ibid.*, p. 335.

12 *ibid.*, p. 336. 13 p. 14.

14 *Art Poétique*, Vol. vii, p. 335.

15 *Franciade*, Vol. iii, p. 35. 16 *Ibid.*, p. 36.

17 *Recueil des Poemes*, Vol. vi, p. 329.

J'ay fait ainsi: toutesfois ce vulgaire,  
A qui jamais je n'ay peu satisfaire,  
N'y n'ay voulu, me fascha tellement  
De son japper en mon advenement,  
Quand je hantay les eaux de Castalie,  
Que nostre langue en est moins embellie."

And finally that fine passage of the *Poétique*,<sup>18</sup> where the poet states his creed again when he says:

"Ne se faut soucier, comme je l'ay dit tant de fois, de l'opinion que pourroit avoir le peuple de tes escrits, tenant pour règle toute assurée qu'il vaut mieux servir à la verité qu'à l'opinion du peuple."

Ronsard's theories yielded somewhat in practice; or, as M. Mellerio, who does not seem to have included the above passages, perhaps to avoid repetition, closes his discussion of the orthography by saying:

"Qu'il y eut en lui deux hommes: l'un prônant avec ardeur une méthode qu'il jugeait très digne d'illustrer la langue, l'autre trop éclairé et trop circonspect pour la pratiquer résolument."

### III.

Ronsard's position is obviously a starting-point. Back of him was only the unformed Modern French. His prominence and association with the Pléiade increase the value of his suggestions, and their statement again in this new book shows the perpetuity of his principles. To note the changes from his attempts to Voltaire, would be a study of historical grammar, or of statements as admirable as the individual themes, for instance, of Prof. Matzke,<sup>19</sup> or the general discussion in the brilliant book of M. Vernier;<sup>20</sup> to state all present conditions would be to give a résumé of Lesaint.<sup>21</sup> Accepting the language as we find and read it, we can see the sense and force of the reforms hanging in the balance in France, between Academy dilatoriness and unpermeated popular opinion, but set forth in the caustic and compelling arguments of M.

<sup>18</sup> Vol. vii, p. 336.

<sup>19</sup> "On the Pronunciation of French Nasal Vowels in the xvi and xvii Centuries," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, Vol. ix, no. 3.

<sup>20</sup> *Étude sur Voltaire Grammairien et la Grammaire au xviiiè Siècle*, Paris, 1888.

<sup>21</sup> *Traité complet de la Prononciation française dans la seconde moitié du xixè siècle*. Halle, 1890.

Renard's pamphlet.<sup>22</sup>

The question is a vital one to France. If, as runs the political aphorism, her colonial question is the Rhine, yet in the larger expansion which is to help her,<sup>23</sup> *orthographic reform* plays a large part. France, whose ratio of population to the rest of Europe has decreased from 38 per 100 in the year 1700 to 13 per 100 in 1880,<sup>24</sup> now sees her idiom struggling in Belgium with Flemish, in Switzerland with German and Italian, in Luxembourg with German, in Canada with English, and in Tunis with an Italian more easily assimilated by the child because of greater orthoepic and less orthographic characteristics. And it is this which gives national as well as literary point to the petition of M. Havet, praying for Academic *imprimatur* on its reforms, and signed by the three directors of instruction (primary, secondary, and superior), by forty members of the Institute, two hundred and fifty University professors, one thousand professors of Lycées and Collèges, and thousands of male and female school-teachers, all this backed by the *Alliance française*, that propaganda in pedagogics, founded for the patriotic purpose of stimulating the study of the language in foreign parts.

We need not rehearse the arguments pro and con of the phonetic school and its opponents, and show how even in its irregularities French orthography is assimilated with phoneticism and that laws of pronunciation unconsciously take precedence over any other. The plea for phonetic treatment in large part coincides with that of its adversaries, the etymologists, in the demand for clarification and the purification from excrescent or epenthetic letters. French orthography, too, has its own historical development, clear and comparatively simple. Persistent attempt at violation of principle does not improve and only destroys etymology itself. And the mass of incongruities and inconsistencies, the false analogies and pedantic re-integrations have

<sup>22</sup> *La Nouvelle Orthographe*, par Auguste Renard, Professeur de l'Université, etc., with preface by M. Havet, professor of the Collège de France, Paris, 1893.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. articles like "L'Essor extérieur de la France," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1893, Vol. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Bertillon's tables.

obscured the facile, the natural, and the truth of linguistic law found in the earlier or middle period of the literature. Examples become too numerous to quote more than one of each under a few of the points criticized by reformers or proposed by them, and which prove the force of their attack, one free from ridiculous reformatations and graphical propositions which complicate things so much as to excite justly the "gaiety of nations," and where no volapuk vagaries hinder immediate adoption.

1. Were French purely etymological we should write *hon* for *on* (*homo*), *ci-jit* (*jacere*) *geaune* (*galbinus*).

2. If *phantome* has given *fantôme*, what hinders *filosofie*, *fotografie* (cf. Spanish simplicity and Italian usage); if *ferais* why not *fesais*, if *rhythme* has sunk to *rythme*, why not *rytme*.

3. So with *doigt* to be like *doi(b)t* (as *cognoistre* dropped *g* and *s*), and all parasitic, and some double letters *vin(g)t*, *t(h)èatre*, *se(p)t*, *at(t)endre*. M. Renard in his witty piece of professorial pamphleteering has succinctly stated in a personal and condensed form the changes desired, and drawn admirable illustrations from other grammarians as well.

4. Change of letters of mixed or more than single pronunciations: *t* as *t* or as *s*; *c* as *k* or as *s*; *x* as *es* or *gz* or *z* or *k*; *il* as *ille* or *ie*.

5. Change in letters of double use, as *c, k, q*, which could be reduced to one; so *an, en, em, ean, aon* (*ancien, encore, empire, Jean, paon*), all pronounced alike but spelled differently.

6. Abolition of the doubled *n* or *t* in feminine nouns and adjectives; for we have its exception in *-ain, -in*, sometimes *-an*.

7. Abolition of *-x* plurals.

8. Simplification of compound-noun complications and of plurals of foreign words.

9. Reduction of *-yer, -eler* and *-eter* verbs to a similar basis.

10. Obviation of dual difficulties in phrases such as:

"Ils usent d'*expédient* et *expédient* des *portions* qu'il faut que nous *portions* aux poules du *couvent* pour qu'elles *couvent*."

11. Assimilation to others of all forms of Latin *ab* or *ac* origin (*académie* and *accabler?* *apercevoir* and *apparaître?*).

M. Renard devotes some of his argument

to answering objections that these changes would distort, if not also debase, the historical heredity of the language. But tradition before the tampering of the post-Renaissance reformers is the strongest argument to back this seemingly radical treatment, as the slightest scholarship will show. If the fear of individualism—the independence of each writer—is present, the greatest literary epochs of France had it, and the public chaos or personal caprice in writing stopped in no way the march of phoneticism, as outlined in the successive prefaces of the Academy dictionaries. Paleographical charts which have recently so multiplied in France, as well as the merest study, prove this at a glance. So, also, dialectic deviations offer no danger; the clearest and most perfect pronunciation, the Parisian, open only to the charge of its *grassement*, will keep the supremacy it has had because of a capital's influence, literary superiority, and as the best medium for the clarifying of rougher exceptions in the provincial speech. But phonetic evolution has always been the law of the language, and the greater its development, the closer will be the assimilation to the classically ignorant but phonetically simple orthography of the *Roland* period. M. Renard sees the reason for this century's stagnation in an advance, in the imperial rulings which fastened upon France an official orthography, and he looks to the recoil of Republicanism in writing as in politics to alter this antiquated scheme.

If, however, the objection be taken from etymology so-called, the glaring incongruities condemn the critics of the new movement. If Latin and Greek words are to be the absolute basis of French words, then, for instance, all English words already assimilated are to be Anglicized anew,<sup>25</sup> for a consistent creed must rule in language. For if, as is the case, the sounds of foreign tongues have been Gallicized, the writing of them should also be thus modified. The inconsistency grows by the partial preservation or excision of letters (*baptême*, *ecrit(p)t*), or the interchanged use of *t* and *s* sounds; if *ch* in *écho* has a *k*-sound, why should *c* in *cant* not be pronounced *chant*?

<sup>25</sup> On this point, cf. Lesaint's statements in reference to French adoption of foreign words and their pronunciation.

And, again, etymological letters do not teach the savant the origin of words, much less, the ignorant. But the finishing point is put to a weak defense by the comparison of inconsistencies drawn from a similar source: *ph* represents the *f*-sound in *physique*, *photographie*; *fantaisie*, *frénétique*; the first phonetic elements of *théâtre*, *thème*, *trône*, *trésor*, are all from Greek *th*; so the *c*-sound in *choléra* and *collère* is given one graphic sign; so, *idylle* and *asile*; *psychologie* and *métémpsychose*; *holocauste* and *olographe*. A similar huge list is found in Latin transferences, where *t=c* or *t*; *l=l* or *ll*, *qu=qu* or *c*, *au=au* or *o*, and *o* gives four different *eu*-sounds. These results have led to insertions in the French of letters not even etymological: *dom(p)ter*, (*h*)*uile*, *hom(m)e*, etc. And so arises the injustice of pronouncing *annexion*, *direction*, *occupation*, *passion*, alike, and teaching quadruple difficulty.

The fear of disturbance due, in education or in commerce, to the introduction of such vast changes is easily conjured by the ease of past partial attempts and the example of Spanish and Italian experiment and even German, while the new processes will be natural to a new generation, and more easily taught. And if printers and publishers, loaded with types and books, oppose the reform, the reduction of characters reducing time in composition and paper, may also reduce price, and double sales may compensate for a supposed loss. This, of course, is not merely a French, but a universal argument.

From phonetic reform will flow fixity of the language and opposition to the growing danger that pronunciation will adapt itself to orthography, instead of the latter to the former, thus ruining the facile beauty and flow of French, and bringing back the harsher elements which the early language had so properly expunged as not suited to the sound nor spirit of the language.

And all dangers will be avoided by limiting the reform by principles of the clearness of the discourse, and retaining the individuality of words, as well as homonyms whose change would lend to ambiguity (*mer*, *mère*, *maire*), or grammatical form be obscured (*cruel*, *cruelle*); those already similar (*grève*, *grève*,

*bière, bière*) numbering about one hundred and twenty-nine, must unfortunately remain exceptions. Final root consonants, betraying origin, are also to be retained (*ar(t), cour(t)*). Thus from the hundreds of modifications proposed appear the following rules:—

1. Suppression of mute *h* after *c* or *t*.
2. Of *ph*, made into *f*.
3. Of *y*=simple *i*.
4. Of double letters where pronounced singly.
5. Each sound to be represented by a sign, letter or group.
6. Abolition of parasitic letters.
7. The same sound to be represented by the same forms.
8. Conversely, the same signs always to express the same sounds.
9. Regular feminines to add simply *e*.
10. Plurals, save proper names, to end only in *s*.
11. The simplification, or not changing as the case may be, of the rules (grammatical) of *nu, demi, vingt, cent, quelques, tout*, the past participles; and changes in verb-finals.

To these rules, the famous report of M. Gréard to the Academy (1893) has added others, such as the suppression of the circumflex, replacing a mute *e*, the regularising of the use of accents, of the words of different genders from the same source, of participial *-ant, -ent*, the suppression of the hyphen in compound nouns (generally).

But if M. Renard has stated practical theories, M. Clédât has applied their substance to immediate scholastic use in his, because of its importance, really great work,<sup>26</sup> prefaced by M. Gaston Paris. No more than M. Renard is he a ranting reformer, but the prover of sensible and scientific substitutions, based upon phonetic and philological principles capable of historical proof as to correctness, if the touchstone be the perpetual law of language and of literature, "the usage of the best writers." And two points add weight: the plea for consistency, which is the key-note of M. Clédât's own reasoning, and the fact that

there is to be no destructive disfiguring. For M. Clédât is a Romance scholar, whose respect for the Classics and love for the founders of philosophical grammar the Greeks, will naturally be both glad to find and eager to accept, changes that combine a common ground of clear gain, *pietas* toward the past, and economic value in saved time, of immediately apparent worth. Without stopping at the brilliant preface of M. Gaston Paris, with its differentiation of the difficulties, the definitions, and the deficiencies of the present grammars and their educational use; with its interesting analysis of the past feebleness in this respect and the present possible function of the Academy; and pointing out the opposition, let us say, of the printers and publishers who see only the immediate danger to their vested interests; or of business, stagnant in part during transition from the old to the new system; or of sacrifice of books already published, and with it the necessity for recasting every dictionary, M. Paris also protests forcibly against the preponderance given to orthography in grammatical study. He calls "national orthography in reality one of the forms of public life." He advocates the calling of a congress of linguists, pedagogues, business men and printers instead of poets and writers or even philosophers and critics, to formulate an orthography, as simple and useful as the metric system decreed by the Convention. And he then closes with a tribute to M. Clédât's work as a precursor of rational instruction and a release from the intolerable burden of incorrect rule, moribund tradition, false analogy and the orthographic vagaries whose violation often ruins the career of an applicant for place, or whose memorized use, through long years of dry exercise, stamp the social status.

The analysis of M. Clédât's book, owing to the latter's clearness, is easy. We may leave aside the Phonetics, the more so as we have such skillful expounders of historical or modern phases in our country as Professors Rambeau and Matzke. M. Clédât proposes what is after all, a normal, safe and sensible theory. The perpetual appeal to the great writers, the French Classicists as models of style, has little worth if we are to accuse them of ignorance

<sup>26</sup> *Grammaire Raisonné de la Langue Française* par Léon Clédât, Professeur, etc., Lauréat de l'Académie Française. Troisième édition, Paris. H. Lesoudier, 1894.

of the fundamentals in the form of words. Unlettered litterateurs are a paradox, an anomaly, and fortunately an exception. Yet Restif de la Bretonne's chaotic and eccentric genius is indisputable in spite of his spelling. The sixteenth century never pretended to learn grammar. Yet, as M. Gaston Paris says, the best authors of the language lived at this time, and as Courier said, those "femmelettes" of the time of Louis XIV wrote better than the most skillful of our own day, and had never learned a word of French grammar any more than had their illustrious cotemporaries. That La Bruyère and La Fontaine, that Vaugelas and Voltaire, that Ronsard and Racine, that Bossuet and Fénelon, that Pascal and Corneille, that Montaigne and Montesquieu, and Madame de Sévigné as the representative of the brilliant band of women of letters in French literature, should be false standards is a contradiction in terms. Also, M. Clédat throughout his whole book aids his cause by constant references to their simpler notations which Voltaire introduced in his edition of Corneille in 1764, and which are at this late day, no more illogical nor terrifying than the stock examples of Spanish or Italian *filosofia*, *filologia* et mult al. "unnature," as the French say, are the original source, the crystallized philological history, or destroy the utility of the words themselves. But he emphatically states that his reforms are based on reason, not authorities.

We are promised shortly by two American professors, a French grammar, whose outline is based upon principles similar to those expounded by M. Clédat. To sum up some of his main propositions, lack of space forbidding us to give the reasons for them or the list of analogies, we have:—

1. Elision of mute *h* in *bonheur*, *heureux*, etc., by analogy with old French, *l'erbe*, *l'iver*, and modern *on* (*hon*), *avoir* (*havoir*), etc.

2. Suppression of *e* mute after a vowel in the interior of words, *jourai*, *j'oublierai*.

3. Suppression of other mute vowels, as *pan* (*paon*), *out* (*août*), with appeal to the classical authors.

4. Substitution of *s* for *x* final mute or pronounced *s*, and for *z* in second persons plural.

5. Consistent simplification of final consonants, (*pie*)*d*, (*noeu*)*d*, *ni*(*d*), like *nu*, etc.; *sein*(*g*), *poïn*(*g*) like *malin*, *témoin*, and restoration of final *t* in all third singular indicatives.

6. Elimination of dual spellings like *différent*, *différend*, *conter*, *compter*; of mute non-final consonants. Why *cor*(*p*)*s*, if we have *corset*, *corsage*; if *sept*, *Septembre*, then why not *recepvoir*, *debvair*, *hôte*? So, *le*(*g*)*s*, *doi*(*g*)*t*, *vin*(*g*)*t*, since we have *dî*(*c*)*t*, *au*(*l*)*tre*, etc.

To the objection of confusion: it is impossible to confuse *le lis* and *tu lis*, or *dis* (*dix*) and *tu dis*, or *pois* (*poids*) and *pois*, or *puis* (*puits*) with *puis*. The context saves the situation.

7. No mute consonants before *s*: *enfants*, *lous*, and in verbs, *prens*, like *sens*, *peins*.

8. Open *è* to be always accented, and to be followed by a single consonant when only one consonant is pronounced: *querè**le*, and in corresponding forms of *-eler* verbs. Similarly *imbécilité*, *batre*, *chate*, like *imbécile*, *abatis*, *rate*. The usage in classical writers is here again a powerful argument.

9. Nasal vowels to be always written with *n*, never with *m*.

10. Nasal *a* to be *an*: *couvant* (*couvent*), *expédiant*; and so, in all present participles, and, as in the classics, *vanger* (cf. *revanche*), *paranthèse*, *comancer*, *tandresse*, and adverbs in *-mant*.

11. Nasal *e* should strictly be as in *plèn* for *plein*.

12. If we have *printanier* with *printemps*, therefore, and as in old pronunciation: *fame*, *couane*, *ardament*.

13. Forms like *ème* (*aime*), *émé* (*aimé*), *ésophage*, like *économique*, etc.

14. Change of *y* to *i* in words of Greek origin: *analise*, *stile*, *pyramide*, etc.; *y* to equal only two *i*'s, or semi-vowel *i*, forming diphthong. The last, as best, gives *craiyon*, *ryen*, etc.

15. The sound *eu* to be everywhere written *oe*, to avoid such discrepancies as *cueillir*, *oeuf*, *neuf*, *oeil*; or *oe* after *c* or *g*, and elsewhere *eu*.

16. *Au* to equal *o*: *orculaire* as *oreille*; *eau* to become at least *au*; (So (Voltaire)



*château, potau*); *o* for *um*, as *albon* (cf. *mon* from *meum*), for we have *circonstance* (*cum*) and others.

17. Loss of every *h* after *r* or *t*, *théâtre*, like *trône*; Italian or Spanish analogy indicates the law.

18. *ch* to equal the soft, *c* (and *k* before *e*, *i*) the hard sound. Thus, the avoidance of *x* transliterated into *qu*, *k*, or *c*, as in *ἄσχειν*, to give *exarchat*, *monarchie*, *monarque*, *patriarcal*, with consequent confusion. Therefore, like Voltaire, *crétien*, *cristianisme*, or with Victor Cousin, *psychologie*.

19. *ph* to be *f*. If we have *fantastique*, *firole*, *faisan*, *et mult. al.*, then *filosofie*, *frénologie*, etc.

20. *k* to replace hard *c* and *qu*, as Ronsard desired. Its universal consistency of sound in European alphabets aids the change. The anomalies here are too numerous to be indicated. M. Clédât here proposes *k* or *q*-simple (without *u*) for the hard *c*. And the addition of *u* or *w* to mark a pronunciation of the type *équateur*, *équestre*. (We might add that this suggests a wise introduction of the letter *w*. There is no real reason for French antipathy to it, as foreign or harsh, though perhaps due to the association with the series *wh* -*o*, -*at*, -*y* -*ere*, always hateful by its aspiration and English character.)

21. *g* soft to be *j*; hard, to remain *g*; so *najer* (*navigare*) like *joie* (*gaudia*).

22. *s* to be always harsh *s*; *z* between vowels to become, as pronounced, *z*; this would abolish the anomaly of four Latin terminations which were pronounced differently (-*tionem*, -*cionem*, -*sionem*, -*ssionem*) and all became French *sion*, being written in four different ways; and reduce to *s* the sound written *s*, or *ss*, or *sc*, or *c*, or *t*, according to their Latin origins (so, *hazarder*, *mazure*, *roze*, *dizième* (since, *dizaine*), etc.). But final *s* linked, to remain *s*.

23. *v* where pronounced *v*; *vagon*, not *wagon*.

24. Liquid *l* to be *y*.

25. Suppression of *i* unpronounced before *gn*; *ognon*, *pognard*.

26. *ks* to be *x*, or *ks* or *cs* (*tocsin*). But *gz* for that sound of *x*, (*egzil*, *egzamen*).

27. (a) Suppression of unnecessary diereases;

(b) of superfluous accents (*ça*, *delà*, *déjà*); (c) of circumflexes in preterites, and imperfect subjunctives; (d) abolition of anomalous duals like *mélange*, but *il mêle*; *conique*, but *cône*, *coteau*, *côte*, *extrémité*, *extrême*; (e) the completion of Academic ruling by extension of the principle of *collège* to other *e*-words, and the writing of futures and conditionals similarly (*cèderai*); (f) introduction of the apostrophe, written as well as pronounced, in the class of words like *quoique*, *puisque*, *lorsque*; (g) its elision in *d'avance*, *d'abord*, etc., since we find *davantage* and *dorénavant*; (h) the writing *presquîle*, *quelcun* (like *chacun*), and *grand mère*, *grand route*, etc.

28. (a) Words compounded with a prepositional prefix or adverb to drop the hyphen: (b) words beginning with the indicative present of verbs to drop hyphens, (*portemonnaie*, *essuimain*, etc.). This will also remove in the singular the *s*-plural of the second word, *couvre pied(s)*; (c) the rule to be extended to cover the type *boutentrain* (cf. *justaucorps*), *meurdefain* (cf. *vaurien*); (d) hyphen-suppression in adjective+substantive compounds, pronouns (*lui même*), in two words linked by prepositions, (*arc-en-ciel*), but (*arc de triomphe*); (*gris-de-fer*), but (*bleu de ciel*), etc., in compounds of two nouns or adjectives (*wagon lit*). But if the adjectives have independent values, as in *sourd-(et) muet*, hyphen; if dependent (*nouveau-né*), omit the hyphen. But even here, great difficulties arise and complete omission is recommended save in words of the type: *Gallo-Romains*, *Franco-Russe*, etc., (e) as in elliptical expressions, such as *coq à l'ane*, *hautlecorps*, and compounds of *ci* and *là*, and in verbs before personal pronouns without epenthetic *t*; *donne moi*, *voulez vous*, but *arrive-t-il?* (f) omission, as well, in prepositional and adverbial phrases, and in numbers. Hence, in all cases save elliptical expressions, either juxtaposition or soldering, according to the preponderance already existing in each class. Writers employing new words in philosophy or in science to have freedom of using hyphen or of not using it.

The second part of M. Clédât's book discusses Flexions and Syntax, the latter here linked to Morphology. The reforms he has here proposed touch rather the manner and

the matter of French grammatical instruction than phoneticism. But the question of forms recurs, as in those of the Article. The value of the older usages, as both phonetic and more logical, is made apparent. Many things might be noted: the suppression of the superfluous (as is proved) partitive, after simplification of the definite. But this learned set of propositions, by going back to archaic forms, is merely anticipating the power of popular speech which is to be as leveling, that is consistent, in the logic of grammar, as it is in insisting upon the simpler processes of word-production (for example, new verbs are put in the first conjugation). This unity in the evolution of language is a pleasing linguistic proof that right will prevail here as in other spheres. And the very hindrances to it are an emphatic proof of what the student (at least) doubts at first in the case of French acquisition—the minutiously difficult phases of French grammatical study. M. Clédât shows constantly how little we analyze the real logic of grammar, how the seemingly impregnable buttresses of the logico-grammatical fortress lack foundation and are really weak structures; and how the combined good-sense and genius of the great authors successfully and with unconscious philosophy, violated rules of literary periods before and after their own.

As constituted at present, intricacies go hand in hand with anomalies and, worse, illogicalness, which a few changes would sweep into consistent classes, and with others would disappear the laws of exceptions and counter-exceptions which make French, the language of clearness, yet a puzzle for precision.

Among other things, the author establishes: 1, the impossibility of fixing rules as to the use of capitals (a growing freedom in this respect is to be noted in France); 2, that foreign names should take French and not their own plurals, while Italian plurals in *i* should change to *s*, (*dilettantes*, *sopranos*), save when already plural in the French singular (*lazzis*, *concerts*); 3, compound words to take *s* at the end, and proper names similarly; 4, freedom in use of singular or plural complements (*des habits d'enfants* or *d'enfant*); 5, all the names

of letters to be masculine, instead of mixed as at present; 6, nouns of double gender to be simplified, and *demi*, *nu*, *feu*, to agree (a historical position) before as well as after their nouns, instead of being ruled by the later growth of hampering laws; and colors used adjectively to agree uniformly.

7. *Vingt*, *cent*, *mille*, to take plurals in violation of the present rule; *même* to drop the plural, save in *le même*, etc.

8. (a) Changes like *c'est eux*, (b) the introduction of two new tenses in the conjugation, (c) the better use of dual auxiliaries (*avoir* and *être*) with certain verbs, (d) and phonetic simplifications, philological, and of verb-types like *prennent* into *prèn-ent* (so, *tiènent*), (e) substitutions of *s* for *x* in the type *veux* (cf. *meus*, *bous*), (f) excision of pseudo-*s* and intercalated *ds* (in *-dre*-verbs) in first singulars, and (g) change of correct *t* for *d* in third singulars (*vaint* not *vainc*, or even, as Bossuet, *il ront*, *rompt*)).

9. Reforms like *dissout*, not *dissous*, in view of feminine *dissoute*, and removing the circumflex from *mouvoir*, whose compounds lack it.

10. Regulation of the irregularities of past participial agreement, reflexive verbs, and invariable words, including negatives.<sup>27</sup>

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#### ON THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE ANGLO-SAXON POEM *Phoenix*.<sup>1</sup>

LITTLE has been said of late about the Cynewulfian question, but the reason is not by any means that it has been regarded as settled. On the contrary, scarcely anything has been definitely settled; and it would seem as if much of the ground might have to be gone over again. The *Phoenix*, *Guðlac*, and *Andreas* are still ranked by many among the works of Cynewulf. In some of the more re-

<sup>27</sup> It must be noted that these categories, while apparently belonging to syntactical theory are often phonetic matters, the laws of participles, as can be proved, being often dependent upon pronunciation as guides to present correctness.

<sup>1</sup> In part from an unpublished dissertation on the same subject submitted to the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences for the degree of Ph. D.